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SUBJECT: GUINEA-BISSAU AT THE UN-DEBATE EXPECTED ON 6 VS.  
12 MONTH UNOGBIS EXTENSION

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: UN Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS) Head Omoregie briefed the Security Council on December 11. He asked for a panel of experts to identify those involved in drug trafficking, since the rise of trafficking and attendant corruption were major destabilizing factors for the country. The UK, France, and Belgium asked to limit UNOGBIS' extension to six months, instead of the twelve months recommended in the Secretary-General's report, to incorporate recommendations of the technical assessment mission expected to be sent to Guinea-Bissau in early 2009. Council members agreed on a press statement which praised the recent legislative elections, recognized an urgent need for Security Sector Reform (SSR), and requested recommendations from the Secretary-General on transforming UNOGBIS into an integrated UN program. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (SBU) UNOGBIS Head and UN Secretary-General Representative for Guinea-Bissau Shola Omoregie briefed the Security Council December 11. He said the African Union is considering how best to protect Guinean President Vieira, following the unsuccessful attack on his residence November 23. Omoregie called for UNOGBIS' mandate, which expires December 31, 2008, to be extended 12 additional months.

¶3. (SBU) USUN PolCouns expressed concern regarding high-level Guinean officials being implicated in the drug trade and asked what measures UNOGBIS thought would help address this problem. Omoregie said that he feared drug trafficking could be institutionalized in the government and that some drug dealers won parliament seats during the legislative elections in November. Omoregie called for the Council to implement a panel of experts to identify who was involved in the drug trade and said the threat of sanctions could be a useful deterrent. Omoregie said the only credible law enforcement entity was the judiciary police, which was being starved of funds apparently due to rampant governmental corruption hoping to weaken it.

¶4. (SBU) The UK, Belgium, and France said UNOGBIS should only be extended six months, to allow for rapid implementation of any recommendations from the planned technical assessment mission due in Guinea-Bissau in early 2009. (NOTE: The UK expert told poloff that a shorter mandate would force UNOGBIS to incorporate change in the next six months, and said the UK was frustrated with UNOGBIS' inaction. Belgium's expert expressed frustration as well to poloff, saying "this assessment mission was requested back in October 2007 and it still hasn't happened." END NOTE). Russia said it was logical to only extend the mandate several months to allow quicker reconfiguration of UNOGBIS. Panama, Libya, and Vietnam called for a twelve month extension of the mandate. COMMENT: USUN expects the duration of the mandate to be the main point of contention during the mandate renewal process. END COMMENT.

¶5. (SBU) All Council members supported a press statement that Croatian PermRep Jurica delivered to the press following the meeting. The statement welcomed the successful legislative elections, expressed concern over the security situation and supported SSR, welcomed the October 28-29 ECOWAS drug trafficking ministerial, and requested recommendations from the Secretary-General on transforming UNOGBIS into an integrated UN program.

Khalilzad